

CLAIMS:

I claim:

1. A declarative user-interface (UI) method comprising the steps of:

 parsing a workflow description;

 identifying in the workflow description, at least one unit of work, each said unit of work corresponding to a pre-configured computing process;

 further identifying in the workflow description meta-information describing data to be accessed through the UI;

 associating said at least one unit of work with selected ones of said meta-information; and,

 constructing the UI according to said association of said at least one unit of work and said meta-information, said construction of the UI accommodating said pre-configured computing process specified by said at least one unit of work.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of retrieving view directives, each said view directive specifying a particular arrangement of the UI.

3. A declarative UI generator comprising:

 a communicator communicatively linking the declarative UI generator to a content server;

 a parser configured to identify a workflow description within contextual content received from said content server, said workflow description specifying at least one unit

of work, said unit of work corresponding to a pre-configured computing process, said workflow description further specifying meta-information describing data to be accessed through the declarative UI; and,

a UI widget factory for creating UI widgets based upon said workflow description; the UI generator positioning said created UI widgets in a reserved portion of a content browser according to said workflow description.

4. The UI generator of claim 3, wherein the said pre-configured computing process comprises a computing process selected from the group consisting of collecting and storing user preferences, collecting and storing personal information, collecting and forwarding purchase information, and database query processing and presentation.

5. A declarative user-interface (UI) method comprising the steps of:

- retrieving a context file from a markup server
- parsing the context file and extracting configuration data, content specifications and at least one workflow description from the context file;
- selecting UI widgets and positioning said selected UI widgets in the UI based upon said content specifications said workflow description;
- configuring the UI for user and data communications based on said configuration data; and,
- accepting user interaction through the configured UI.

6. A declarative user-interface (UI) method comprising the steps of:

- reserving a portion of an application UI;
- receiving content-based specifications and at least one workflow description from a content server, said content-based specifications specifying characteristics of content to be displayed in said reserved portion of said application UI and said at least one workflow description specifying permissible interactions with said content;
- selecting UI widgets based upon said specified characteristics; and,
- positioning said UI widgets in said reserved portion of said application UI according to said at least one workflow description.

7. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for generating a declarative user-interface (UI), the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

- parsing a workflow description;
- identifying in the workflow description, at least one unit of work, each said unit of work corresponding to a pre-configured computing process;
- further identifying in the workflow description meta-information describing data to be accessed through the UI;
- associating said at least one unit of work with selected ones of said meta-information; and,

11 constructing the UI according to said association of said at least one unit of work
 12 and said meta-information, said construction of the UI accommodating said
 13 pre-configured computing process specified by said at least one unit of work.

1 8. The machine readable storage of claim 7, further comprising the step of
 2 retrieving view directives, each said view directive specifying a particular arrangement
 3 of the UI.

1 9. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for
 2 generating a declarative user-interface (UI), the computer program comprising a routine
 3 set of instructions for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

4 retrieving a context file from a markup server

5 parsing the context file and extracting configuration data, content specifications

6 and at least one workflow description from the context file;

7 selecting UI widgets and positioning said selected UI widgets in the UI based

8 upon said content specifications said workflow description;

9 configuring the UI for user and data communications based on said configuration

10 data; and,

11 accepting user interaction through the configured UI.

1 10. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for
2 generating a declarative user-interface (UI), the computer program comprising a routine
3 set of instructions for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

4 reserving a portion of an application UI;

5 receiving content-based specifications and at least one workflow description from
6 a content server, said content-based specifications specifying characteristics of content
7 to be displayed in said reserved portion of said application UI and said at least one
8 workflow description specifying permissible interactions with said content;

9 selecting UI widgets based upon said specified characteristics; and,

10 positioning said UI widgets in said reserved portion of said application UI according to
11 said at least one workflow description.